



## SPP News

Welcome to this exciting issue of SPP News, the newsletter that is guaranteed to keep you up-to-date about the work that SPP is undertaking in the provinces of Northern and Western Cape, and much more.

It's almost the end of the year and

what better way to end off than to look at the various projects SPP has been involved with during the course of this year. This issue is the second issue since the inception of *SPP News* and we hope you will find it as interesting as we did working on it.

In this issue we look at SPP's external evaluation which took place from

August to October. A report of the evaluation process is available for all those who are interested in getting a glimpse of what others say about our work.

It also features 3 case studies of SPP's work as well as information on other projects. Enjoy!

## From the Director: Report on SPP External Evaluation

During the months of August to October 2004, an evaluation was conducted on the work of SPP and the difference our efforts made to the lives of the women and men and their development projects. External consultants were used in order to get an



Ricardo, of SPP, with members of the Genadenberg Land Reform Project

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independent view of what different role players and stakeholders had to say about SPP, how we work, what difference we make and where we can improve. The consultants also chose the projects and the people to be interviewed.

Focus group discussions were held with community groups in all the three areas where SPP works (Hantam Karoo, Namaqualand and West Coast). These groups consisted of women and men.

Through the evaluation process community groups have shown to be more aware of their rights and responsibilities in the changing land reform and agriculture context. There is an observable increase in the number of women participating in SPP-facilitated projects and new leaders are beginning to emerge.

Numerous examples reflect the work that SPP has done in terms of mobilising, empowering, and providing assistance and support to communities.

## The Garies' Women's Continuing Fight for Land and Resources



Members of the Garies Akkerbou Vroue Vereniging

The Garies Akkerbou Vroue Vereniging was established in July 2002 and functioned as an informal group. The main objective of this group is to improve the livelihoods of women in Garies. In 2002 they got involved in a food gardening project at the sewage works in Garies. As a result of the quality of the soil and the losses they suffered in town, they approached the municipality to gain access to gardening land at Roodebergsloof farm near Garies.

SPP came into the picture when the Kamiesberg Municipality approached the organisation to assist the women's group with their

initiative on the farm. At the beginning of 2004 SPP conducted a needs assessment and developed a collaborative plan of action with the women. Issues/problems raised by the women included; lack of a formal agreement with the municipality; lack of 'hands-on' administration by the municipality; no infrastructural support; need for additional funding; need for a clear lobbying strategy; marketing; and distance from town (and financial implications).

In March 2004 SPP concluded the formalisation of the group and are currently considering options for the establishment of an appropriate legal entity. The plan of action includes the estab-

lishment of a formal group (with a constitution), formalising tenure arrangements (with the municipality), facilitating access to agricultural extension services, implements and inputs, and building the capacity of this group.

Currently the women's group and SPP are in the process of

negotiating the tenure arrangements with the municipality. Although the women are still experiencing all the difficulties inherent in projects of this nature in rural areas, they are as committed and motivated as the day they moved into the farm (with the objective of changing the livelihood of the Garies women).



The group, clearing land for their garden project

## Bitline—a lifeline for the landless



**T**he Bitline CC was started in 1997 when a group of emerging farmers identified their need for land. They then formed the Nieuwoudtville EFA in 1998 to address their needs and to start negotiations as an organised body with the Transitional Council (TC) to secure access to commonage land. In 1998 they were granted access to a piece of land on an informal basis, which was suspended at short notice in 2000. The group had to remove their livestock and, as an alternative, approached the commercial farmers for temporary arrangements for leasing land. They managed to lease a piece of land from Mr. W. S. Louw, which resulted in the purchasing of this same land through the LRAD Programme of DLA. This land was transferred into the name of Bitline Close Corporation (CC) with Mr. K. Louw, Ms. S.E. Louw, Mr. Lionell Louw, Mr. Jan van Wyk, Mr. H. Steenkamp as members.

### ACCESS TO LAND

SPP assisted in negotiations with the TC regarding the commonage land as well as with the commercial farmer regarding the purchasing of the land through the Land

Redistribution and Development (LRAD) process.

### MANAGEMENT OF LAND

This involved implementing a management and land use plan in conjunction with DOA.

**CAPACITY BUILDING OF GROUP**  
SPP was instrumental in arranging relevant training opportunities through service providers to address the needs of the group.

### ACCESS TO RESOURCES

- Negotiations took place with other relevant role players e.g. DOA and NGOs such as EMG;
- Facilitation of access to credit from Land Bank for capital cost of project;
- Facilitating the process of accessing infrastructure e.g. Upgrading of the borehole and acquiring of water tanks through the Land care programme of DOA.

### EXPLORING NEW OPPORTUNITIES

- Exploring the production of Organic Rooibos tea;
- Exploring the mining of Sandstone.

### ACCESS TO ADDITIONAL OTHER RESOURCES

- Facilitate the process of access to implements needed for Mining and Rooibos tea activities e.g. Tractor, Trailer, Compressor, Jackhammer, Plough, Crusher; Safety equipment etc.

### IMPACT OF INTERVENTIONS

Small-scale farmers organised themselves as landowners, which contributed to the agricultural economic sector. They created job opportunities for unemployed women, men and handicapped people in Nieuwoudtville.

### LESSONS LEARNT;

The shifting from the implementation of a land reform to an agrarian reform approach allowed for new strategies to be pursued that involved our clients in agricultural activities other than sheep farming. More value was placed on their knowledge, their experiences and skills.

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## SPP External Evaluation

**In general SPP is recognised as a key stakeholder/role player in the land reform sector.**

In this process SPP assisted communities in building sustainable community structures led by community members, for example, organising emerging farmers into EFA's as well as initiating and establishing ESTA forums to respond to the plight of farm workers.

Many people also felt that SPP had too much on their hands and therefore could not pay adequate attention to each of the projects.

In general SPP is recognised as a key stakeholder/role player in the land reform sector. In relation to

the slow pace of the land reform process and bias towards the poor, the organisation is participating in various forums and committees at provincial level to try and influence policies and practice within government.

SPP seemed in the main to utilise its resources effectively, and had various systems in place to monitor the use of resources.

Some of the recommendations to SPP for the future development of our work with communities/groups were;

- An exit strategy should be carefully considered;

- SPP needs to find more creative ways of supporting thriving projects;
- Paying more attention to those projects that still need extensive mentoring and nurturing;
- SPP should develop a communication strategy that focuses on the sector as a whole but also at community level where it should communicate to all stakeholders its role and responsibilities at different phases including after completion of projects.

Since the completion of this evaluation SPP has developed a communica-



## Women's Courts—rewriting her-story

### The Courts of Women: Where did the idea start?

The Asian Women's Human Rights Council (AWHRC) and El Taller, in collaboration with several organisations and networks in different countries and regions have organised 18 courts of women in different parts of the world. These are public

hearings in which the voices of the women are listened to – as victims, survivors, resisters. The Courts reveal in a powerful way, the inter-connections between the various forms of personal and public violence against women in different societies. These testimonies are linked to actions to change

the position of women in society at large.

The women of the West Coast, Hantam Karoo and Namaqualand have been coming together since October 2004 to work out a strategy to organise and take their struggles to the broader public. SPP and the Gender Equity Unit (University of the Western Cape) facilitated these dialogues and planning in which more than seventy women participated. The main aim is to start a campaign from October 2004 – October 2005.

### What are the women saying:

- The organisations of

poor rural women must be strengthened to address landlessness and poverty;

- Their life stories must be told and documented;
- We need to recognise and promote women's indigenous land use practices;
- Poor rural women must be provided with the opportunity to voice their critique about the current land reform processes;
- Policy changes are needed to benefit poor rural women;
- Political pressure will force the state and other institutions to address the needs of poor rural women.



*Participants at the Women's Court Workshop*

## The Vanrhynsdorp EFA

The Vanrhynsdorp EFA struggled since 1999 for access to commonage land. A breakthrough came in March this year when a lease agreement was signed between the EFA and the Matzikama municipality during March this year. The group currently has 10 members with 20 kraals, 36+ sheep, 20+ goat and 24 pigs. The group now has access to 1ha of land for planting lusern as well as additional grazing land.

The Matzikama municipality and the Department of Agriculture provided the group with infrastructure and training. The group was successful in their application for help from the Department of Water Affairs and was able to buy water pipes and tanks for leading water from the sewerage dam to the lusern. The group also applied for help in sinking a borehole in order for them to plant more lusern and have additional feed

for their livestock. The group also approached commercial farmers in the area for help and was supported by them in terms skills transfer and material that they might need.

The group fenced the piece of land on their own and through hard work and commitment they hope to gain access to additional land for a vegetable garden in the new



*Members of the Vanrhynsdorp EFA with Anne Stagler from SPP*

## An Introduction to the Wade Project

### What is the WADE Project?

The WADE Project aims to investigate the role that floods play in recharging the groundwater supplies of arid regions such as Namaqualand. In Namaqualand, the Buffels River does not flow very often or for very long. But when the rains do come and the rivers flow, a lot of the water that is flowing down the river sinks into the sand and some of it gets into the groundwater from where it can be used for drinking water or for agriculture. Exactly how much of the groundwater that is used comes from water flowing down the river is not known. The aim of the WADE project is to find out more information about how much water from the Buffels River is

entering the groundwater and so discover if it is possible to extract more water from boreholes to use for drinking water or for other purposes.

### Who is sponsoring the WADE Project?

The WADE Project is sponsored by the European Union

### Where will the WADE Project be working?

In Namaqualand at two sites along the Buffels River, one near Buffels River and another in the Rooifontein/Kamassies area. The project also has study sites in Namibia at the Kuiseb River as well as in Spain and Israel.

### Who is involved in the WADE Project?

Twelve partner organisations are involved in the Project including the Nama-Khoi and Kamiesberg Municipalities, The Surplus People Project and the University of Cape Town. Other partners include Universities and scientific researchers from Spain, Germany, Scotland and Israel.

### What will the WADE Project be doing?

The WADE Project will install special boreholes to monitor the depth of the water table and also identify the source of any water that is entering into the groundwater. These boreholes will provide information on the amount and source of groundwater. We will also be looking at the vegetation that occurs along the River and how

**We will also be looking at the vegetation that occurs along the River and how much of the groundwater is used by this vegetation.**



*Wade Project*

## What is SPP?

The Surplus People Project (SPP) is a non-government service organisation working in the Western and Northern Cape Provinces of South Africa. It is a non-profit organisation governed by a Board of Directors who are elected each year by the Members. The Members are people drawn from the communities that SPP serves, other interested and influential people interested in rural development and current and previous staff.

The organisation was established in the mid 1980s to support communities in their struggles to resist land dispossession. After the Land Reform Programme was developed in the 1990s, SPP shifted to implement land reform and rural development, working with landless groups of people to get land, manage it and develop it.

SPP has four offices — one in Namaqualand region, one in the Karoo region one in Cictrusdal and the other in Cape Town. The organization has 22 staff.

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## The WADE Project

much of the groundwater is used by this vegetation. Researchers will evaluate the socio-economic importance of groundwater from the Buffels River for the population of the area and try to understand environmental changes within catchment areas in terms of water management, land use, pol-

icy and climate change.

Current patterns of water use and water provision will be examined and potential ways of improving water management and availability will be investigated.

### What will the outcome of the WADE Project be?

The WADE Project is expected to run for three years. At the end of the project all the information that has been collected will be made available to the community and the municipality so that the information can

be used for planning around water resources. For any questions regarding the WADE Project please contact Willem Engelbrecht at the Nama-Khoi municipality or Louis van Wyk at the Kamiesberg municipality.

## Letter Box

Geagte Heer,

Graag deel ek u hulle mee dat 'n groepie van ons na die plaas dikmatjie gaan kyk het.

Ons is baie geïnteresseerd in die plaas. Maar die groot probleem wat ons het is vervoer om daar uit te kom. Die tuin het ook baie aandag nodig. Daar sal iets aan

die heining gedoen moet word. Daarvoor sal ons ook hulp nodig he. Ons het uie plantjies van Pella tuin projek ontvang en omdat ons nie kon by die plaas uitkom nie het ons 'n stukkie grond by die Herberg gevra en die uie daar geplant omdat ons dit nie wou laat verwaarloos nie. Ons jong mense stel nie belang ons is nou net bejaardes wat met

die tuin gemoed is. Daarom sal ons dit waardeer as ons 'n stukkie grond na aan ons kan kry. Wat loop afstand is. Dan sal ons ook wil dat daar opleiding in tuinbou aangebied word. Ons sal ook die grond wet van die meent komitee wil he.

Met dank  
Die uwe  
H.J. Claasen

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